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**Karl Marx. Inaugural Address to the International Workingmen's Association, 1864**

## **"The First International"**

### **Workingmen:**

It is a great fact that the misery of the working masses has not diminished from 1848 to 1864, and yet this period is unrivaled for the development of its industry and the growth of its commerce. In 1850 a moderate organ of the British middle class, of more than average information, predicted that if the exports and imports of England were to rise 50 per cent, English pauperism would sink to zero. Alas! On April 7, 1864, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delighted his parliamentary audience by the statement that the total import and export of England had grown in 1863 "to 443,955,000 pounds! That astonishing sum about three times the trade of the comparatively recent epoch of 1843! " With all that, he was eloquent upon "poverty". "Think," he exclaimed, "of those who are on the border of that region," upon "wages... not increased"; upon "human life... in nine cases out of ten but a struggle of existence! " He did not speak of the people of Ireland, gradually replaced by machinery in the north and by sheepwalks in the south, though even the sheep in that unhappy country are decreasing, it is true, not at so rapid a rate as the men. He did not repeat what then had been just betrayed by the highest representation of the upper ten thousand in a sudden fit of terror. When garrote panic had reached a certain height the House of Lords caused an inquiry to be made into, and a report to be published upon, transportation and penal servitude. Out came the murder in the bulky Blue Book of 1863 and proved it was, by official facts and figures, that the worst of the convicted criminals, the penal serfs of England and Scotland, toiled much less and fared far better than the agricultural laborers of England and Scotland. But this was not all. When, consequent upon the Civil War in America, the operatives of Lancashire and Cheshire were thrown upon the streets, the same House of Lords sent to the manufacturing districts a physician commissioned to investigate into the smallest possible amount of carbon and nitrogen, to be administered in the cheapest and plainest form, which on an average might just suffice to "avert starvation diseases". Dr. Smith, the medical deputy, ascertained that 28,000 grains of carbon and 1,330 grains of nitrogen were the weekly allowance that would keep an average adult... just over the level of starvation diseases, and he found furthermore that quantity pretty nearly to agree with the scanty nourishment to which the pressure of

extreme distress had actually reduced the cotton operatives (1). But now mark! The same learned doctor was later on again deputed by the medical officer of the Privy Council to enquire into the nourishment of the poorer laboring classes. The results of his research are embodied in the "Sixth Report on Public Health", published by order of Parliament in the course of the present year. What did the doctor discover? That the silk weavers, the needlewomen, the kid glovers, the stock weavers, and so forth, received on an average, not even the distress pittance of the cotton operatives, not even the amount of carbon and nitrogen "just sufficient to avert starvation diseases".

"Moreover: — we quote from the report — "as regards the examined families of the agricultural population, it appeared that more than a fifth were with less than the estimated sufficiency of carbonaceous food, that more than one-third were with less than the estimated sufficiency of nitrogenous food, and that in three counties (Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Somersetshire) insufficiency of nitrogenous food was the average diet."

"It must be remembered," adds the official report, "that privation of food is very reluctantly borne, and that, as a rule, great poorness of diet will only come when other privations have preceded it.... Even cleanliness will have been found costly or difficult, and if there still be self-respectful endeavors to maintain it, every such endeavor will represent additional pangs of hunger."

"These are painful reflections, especially when it is remembered that the poverty to which they advert is not the deserved poverty of idleness; in all cases it is the poverty of working populations. Indeed the work which obtains the scanty pittance of food is for the most part excessively prolonged."

The report brings out the strange and rather unexpected fact:

"That of the division of the United Kingdom," England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, "the agricultural population of England," the richest division, "is considerably the worst fed"; but that even the agricultural laborers of Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Somersetshire fare better than great numbers of skilled indoor operatives of the East of London.

Such are the official statements published by order of Parliament in 1864, during the millennium of free trade, at a time when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House of Commons that

"the average condition of the British laborer has improved in a degree we know to be extraordinary and unexampled in the history of any country or any age."

Upon these official congratulations jars the dry remark of the official Public Health Report:

"The public health of a country means the health of its masses, and the masses will scarcely be healthy unless, to their very base, they be at least moderately prosperous."

Dazzled by the "Progress of the Nation" statistics dancing before his eyes, the Chancellor of the Exchequer exclaims in wild ecstasy:

"From 1842 to 1852, the taxable income of the country increased by 6 per cent; in the eight years from 1853 to 1861, it has increased from the basis taken in 1853, 20 per cent! The fact is so astonishing to be almost incredible! ... This intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power," adds Mr. Gladstone, "is entirely confined to classes of property."

If you want to know under what conditions of broken health, tainted morals, and mental ruin that "intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power... entirely confined to classes of property" was, and is, being produced by the classes of labor, look to the picture hung up in the last Public Health Report of the workshops of tailors, printers, and dressmakers! Compare the "Report of the Children's Employment Commission" of 1863, where it states, for instance, that

"the potters as a class, both men and women, represent a much degenerated population, both physically and mentally", that "the unhealthy child is an unhealthy parent in his turn", that "a progressive deterioration of the race must go on", and that "the degenerescence of the population of Staffordshire would be even greater were it not for the constant recruiting from the adjacent country, and the intermarriage with more healthy races."

Glance at Mr. Tremenheere's Blue Book of the "Grievances Complained of by the Journeymen Bakers"! And who has not shuddered at the paradox made by the inspectors of factories, and illustrated by the Registrar General, that the Lancashire operatives, while put upon the distress pittance of food, were actually improving in health, because of their temporary exclusion by the cotton famine from the cotton factory, and the mortality of the children was decreasing, because their mothers were now at last allowed to give them, instead of Godfrey's cordial, their own breasts.

Again, reverse the medal! The income and property tax returns laid before the House of Commons on July 20, 1864, teach us that the persons with yearly incomes valued by the tax gatherer of 50,000 pounds and upwards had, from April 5, 1862, to April 5, 1863, been joined by a dozen and one, their number having increased in that single year from 67 to 80. The same returns disclose the fact that about 3,000 persons divide among themselves a yearly income of about 25,000,000 pounds sterling, rather more than the total revenue doled out annually to the whole mass of the agricultural laborers of England and Wales. Open the census of 1861 and you will find

that the number of male landed proprietors of England and Wales has decreased from 16,934 in 1851 to 15,066 in 1861, so that the concentration of land had grown in 10 years 11 per cent. If the concentration of the soil of the country in a few hands proceeds at the same rate, the land question will become singularly simplified, as it had become in the Roman Empire when Nero grinned at the discovery that half of the province of Africa was owned by six gentlemen.

We have dwelt so long upon these facts "so astonishing to be almost incredible" because England heads the Europe of commerce and industry. It will be remembered that some months ago one of the refugee sons of Louis Philippe publicly congratulated the English agricultural laborer on the superiority of his lot over that of his less florid comrade on the other side of the Channel. Indeed, with local colors changed, and on a scale somewhat contracted, the English facts reproduce themselves in all the industrious and progressive countries of the Continent. In all of them there has taken place, since 1848, an unheard-of development of industry, and an unheard-of expansion of imports and exports. In all of them, as in England, a minority of the working classes got their real wages somewhat advanced; while in most cases the monetary rise of wages denoted no more a real access of comforts than the inmate of the metropolitan poorhouse or orphan asylum, for instance, was in the least benefited by his first necessities costing L9, 15s. 8d. in 1861 against L7 7s. 4d. in 1852. Everywhere the great mass of the working classes were sinking down to a lower depth, at the same rate at least that those above them were rising in the social scale. In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only decried by those whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, not all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labor must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonisms. Death of starvation rose almost to the rank of an institution, during this intoxicating epoch of economical progress, in the metropolis of the British empire. That epoch is marked in the annals of the world by the quickened return, the widening compass, and the deadlier effects of the social pest called a commercial and industrial crisis.

After the failure of the Revolution of 1848, all party organizations and party journals of the working classes were, on the Continent, crushed by the iron hand of force, the most advanced sons of labor fled in despair to the transatlantic republic, and the short-lived dreams of emancipation vanished before an epoch of industrial fever, moral marasm, and political reaction. The defeat of the continental working classes, partly owed to the diplomacy of the English government, acting then as now in fraternal solidarity with the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, soon spread its contagious effects to this side of the Channel. While the rout of their continental brethren unmanned the English working classes, and broke their faith in their own cause, it

restored to the landlord and the money lord their somewhat shaken confidence. They insolently withdrew concessions already advertised. The discoveries of new gold lands led to an immense exodus, leaving an irreparable void in the ranks of the British proletariat. Others of its formerly active members were caught by the temporary bribe of greater work and wages, and turned into "political blacks". All the efforts made at keeping up, of remodeling, the Chartist movement failed signally; the press organs of the working class died one by one of the apathy of the masses, and in point of fact never before seemed the English working class so thoroughly reconciled to a state of political nullity. If, then, there had been no solidarity of action between the British and the continental working classes, there was, at all events, a solidarity of defeat.

And yet the period passed since the Revolutions of 1848 has not been without its compensating features. We shall here only point to two great factors.

After a 30 years' struggle, fought with almost admirable perseverance, the English working classes, improving a momentaneous split between the landlords and money lords, succeeded in carrying the Ten Hours' Bill. The immense physical, moral, and intellectual benefits hence accruing to the factory operatives, half-yearly chronicled in the reports of the inspectors of factories, are now acknowledged on all sides. Most of the continental governments had to accept the English Factory Act in more or less modified forms, and the English Parliament itself is every year compelled to enlarge its sphere of action. But besides its practical import, there was something else to exalt the marvelous success of this workingmen's measure. Through their most notorious organs of science, such as Dr. Ure, Professor Senior, and other sages of that stamp, the middle class had predicted, and to their heart's content proved, that any legal restriction of the hours of labor must sound the death knell of British industry, which, vampirelike, could but live by sucking blood, and children's blood, too. In olden times, child murder was a mysterious rite of the religion of Moloch, but it was practiced on some very solemn occasions only, once a year perhaps, and then Moloch had no exclusive bias for the children of the poor. This struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labor raged the more fiercely since, apart from frightened avarice, it told indeed upon the great contest between the blind rule of the supply and demand laws which form the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class. Hence the Ten Hours' Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class.

But there was in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labor over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold "hands". The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed instead of by

argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labor need not be monopolized as a means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the laboring man himself; and that, like slave labor, like serf labor, hired labor is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labor plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart. In England, the seeds of the co-operative system were sown by Robert Owen; the workingmen's experiments tried on the Continent were, in fact, the practical upshot of the theories, not invented, but loudly proclaimed, in 1848.

At the same time the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond doubt that, however, excellent in principle and however useful in practice, co-operative labor, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is perhaps for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic middle-class spouters, and even keep political economists have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very co-operative labor system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatizing it as the sacrilege of the socialist. To save the industrious masses, co-operative labor ought to be developed to national dimensions, and, consequently, to be fostered by national means. Yet the lords of the land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defense and perpetuation of their economic monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labor. Remember the sneer with which, last session, Lord Palmerston put down the advocated of the Irish Tenants' Right Bill. The House of Commons, cried he, is a house of landed proprietors. To conquer political power has, therefore, become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy, and France, there have taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political organization of the workingmen's party.

One element of success they possess — numbers; but numbers weigh in the balance only if united by combination and led by knowledge. Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts. This thought prompted the workingmen of different countries assembled on September 28, 1864, in public meeting at St. Martin's Hall, to found the International Association.

Another conviction swayed that meeting.

If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfill that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure? It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England, that saved the west of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic. The shameless approval, mock sympathy, or idiotic indifference with which the upper classes of Europe have witnessed the mountain fortress of the Caucasus falling a prey to, and heroic Poland being assassinated by, Russia: the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is in St. Petersburg, and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe, have taught the working classes the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws or morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes.

**Proletarians of all countries, unite!**

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From: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1864/10/27.htm>

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## On Authority

A number of Socialists have latterly launched a regular crusade against what they call the *principle of authority*. It suffices to tell them that this or that act is *authoritarian* for it to be condemned. This summary mode of procedure is being abused to such an extent that it has become necessary to look into the matter somewhat more closely.

Authority, in the sense in which the word is used here, means: the imposition of the will of another upon ours; on the other hand, authority presupposes subordination. Now, since these two words sound bad, and the relationship which they represent is disagreeable to the subordinated party, the question is to ascertain whether there is any way of dispensing with it, whether — given the conditions of present-day society — we could not create another social system, in which this authority would be given no scope any longer, and would consequently have to disappear.

On examining the economic, industrial and agricultural conditions which form the basis of present-day bourgeois society, we find that they tend more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals. Modern industry, with its big factories and mills, where hundreds of workers supervise complicated machines driven by steam, has superseded the small workshops of the separate producers; the carriages and wagons of the highways have become substituted by railway trains, just as the small schooners and sailing feluccas have been by steam-boats. Even agriculture falls increasingly under the dominion of the machine and of steam, which slowly but relentlessly put in the place of the small proprietors big capitalists, who with the aid of hired workers cultivate vast stretches of land.

Everywhere combined action, the complication of processes dependent upon each other, displaces independent action by individuals. But whoever mentions combined action speaks of organisation; now, is it possible to have organisation without authority?

Supposing a social revolution dethroned the capitalists, who now exercise their authority over the production and circulation of wealth. Supposing, to adopt entirely the point of view of the anti-authoritarians, that the land and the instruments of labour had become the collective property of the workers who use them. Will authority have disappeared, or will it only have changed its form? Let us see.

Let us take by way of example a cotton spinning mill. The cotton must pass through at least six successive operations before it is reduced to the state of thread, and these operations take place for the most part in different rooms. Furthermore, keeping the machines going requires an engineer to look after the steam engine, mechanics to make the current repairs, and many other labourers whose business it is to transfer the products from one room to another, and so forth. All these workers, men,



women and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy. The workers must, therefore, first come to an understanding on the hours of work; and these hours, once they are fixed, must be observed by all, without any exception. Thereafter particular questions arise in each room and at every moment concerning the mode of production, distribution of material, etc., which must be settled by decision of a delegate placed at the head of each branch of labour or, if possible, by a majority vote, the will of the single individual will always have to subordinate itself, which means that questions are settled in an authoritarian way. The automatic machinery of the big factory is much more despotic than the small capitalists who employ workers ever have been. At least with regard to the hours of work one may write upon the portals of these factories: *Lasciate ogni autonomia, voi che entrate!* [Leave, ye that enter in, all autonomy behind!]

If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him by subjecting him, in so far as he employs them, to a veritable despotism independent of all social organisation. Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel.

Let us take another example — the railway. Here too the co-operation of an infinite number of individuals is absolutely necessary, and this co-operation must be practised during precisely fixed hours so that no accidents may happen. Here, too, the first condition of the job is a dominant will that settles all subordinate questions, whether this will is represented by a single delegate or a committee charged with the execution of the resolutions of the majority of persons interested. In either case there is a very pronounced authority. Moreover, what would happen to the first train dispatched if the authority of the railway employees over the Hon. passengers were abolished?

But the necessity of authority, and of imperious authority at that, will nowhere be found more evident than on board a ship on the high seas. There, in time of danger, the lives of all depend on the instantaneous and absolute obedience of all to the will of one.

When I submitted arguments like these to the most rabid anti-authoritarians, the only answer they were able to give me was the following: Yes, that's true, but there it is not the case of authority which we confer on our delegates, *but of a commission entrusted!* These gentlemen think that when they have changed the names of things they have changed the things themselves. This is how these profound thinkers mock at the whole world.

We have thus seen that, on the one hand, a certain authority, no matter how delegated, and, on the other hand, a certain subordination, are things which,

independently of all social organisation, are imposed upon us together with the material conditions under which we produce and make products circulate.

We have seen, besides, that the material conditions of production and circulation inevitably develop with large-scale industry and large-scale agriculture, and increasingly tend to enlarge the scope of this authority. Hence it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good. Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society. If the autonomists confined themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the world.

Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All Socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and will be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon — authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionists. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they're talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction.

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From: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1872/10/authority.htm>

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### **and Political Indifferentism:**

From: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1873/01/indifferentism.htm>

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## Political Indifferentism

[redacted]

This brings us to the oracle of these doctors of social science, M. Proudhon. While the master had the courage to declare himself energetically opposed to all economic activities (combinations, strikes, etc.) which contradicted his redemptive theories of *mutualism*, at the same time through his writings and personal participation, he encouraged the working-class movement, and his disciples do not dare to declare themselves openly against it. As early as 1847, when the master's great work, *The System of Economic Contradictions*, had just appeared, I refuted his sophisms against the working-class movement. [2] None the less in 1864, after the *loi Ollivier*, which granted the French workers, in a very restrictive fashion, a certain right of combination, Proudhon returned to the charge in a book, *The Political Capacities of the Working Classes*, published a few days after his death.

The master's strictures were so much to the taste of the bourgeoisie that *The Times*, on the occasion of the great tailors' strike in London in 1866, did Proudhon the honour of translating him and of condemning the strikes with the master's very words. Here are some selections.

The miners of Rive-de-Gier went on strike; the soldiers were called in to bring them back to reason. Proudhon cries, 'The authority which had the miners of Rive-de-Gier shot acted disgracefully. But it was acting like Brutus of old caught between his paternal love and his consular duty: it was necessary to sacrifice his sons to save the Republic. Brutus did not hesitate, and posterity dare not condemn him.' [3] In all the memory of the proletariat there is no record of a bourgeois who has hesitated to sacrifice his workers to save his interests. What Brutuses the bourgeois must then be!

'Well, no: there is no right of combination, just as there is no right to defraud or steal or to commit incest or adultery.' [4] There is however all too clearly a right to stupidity.

What then are the eternal principles, in whose name the master fulminates his mystic anathema?

*First eternal principle:* 'Wage rates determine the price of commodities.'

Even those who have no knowledge of political economy and who are unaware that the great bourgeois economist Ricardo in his *Principles of Political Economy*, published in 1817, has refuted this long-standing error once and for all, are however aware of the remarkable fact that British industry can sell its products at a price far lower than that of any other nation, although wages are relatively higher in England than in any other European country.

*Second eternal principle:* 'The law which authorizes combinations is highly anti-juridical, anti-economic and contrary to any society and order.' [5] In a word 'contrary to the economic *right* of free competition'.

If the master had been a little less chauvinistic, he might have asked himself how it happened that forty years ago a law, thus contrary to the *economic rights of free competition*, was promulgated in England; and that as industry develops, and alongside it *free competition*, this law -- so contrary to *any society and order* - imposes itself as a necessity even to bourgeois states themselves. He might perhaps have discovered that this right (with capital R) exists only in the *Economic Manuals* written by the Brothers Ignoramus of bourgeois political economy, in which manuals are contained such pearls as this: 'Property is the fruit of labour' ('of the labour', they neglect to add, 'of others').

*Third eternal principle:* 'Therefore, under the pretext of raising the working class from its condition of so-called social inferiority, it will be necessary to start by denouncing a whole class of citizens, the class of bosses, entrepreneurs, masters and bourgeois; it will be necessary to rouse workers' democracy to despise and to hate these unworthy members of the middle class; it will be necessary to prefer mercantile and industrial war to legal repression, and class antagonism to the state police.' [6]

The master, in order to prevent the working class from escaping from its so-called *social inferiority*, condemns the combinations that constitute the working class as a class antagonistic to the respectable *category of masters, entrepreneurs and bourgeois*, who for their part certainly prefer, as does Proudhon, *the state police to class antagonism*. To avoid any offence to this respectable class, the good M. Proudhon recommends to the workers (up to the coming of the *mutualist regime*, and despite its serious disadvantages) freedom or competition, our 'only guarantee'. [7]

The master preached indifference in matters of economics -- *so as to protect bourgeois freedom or competition*, our only guarantee. His disciples preach indifference in matters of politics -- *so as to protect bourgeois freedom*, their only guarantee. If the early Christians, who also preached political indifferentism, needed an emperor's arm to transform themselves from oppressed into oppressors, so the modern apostles of political indifferentism do not believe that their own eternal principles impose on them abstinence from worldly pleasures and the temporal privileges of bourgeois society. However we must recognize that they display a stoicism worthy of the early Christian martyrs in supporting those fourteen or sixteen working hours such as overburden the workers in the factories.

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## III. Historical Materialism

[redacted]

In the trusts, freedom of competition changes into its very opposite — into monopoly; and the production without any definite plan of capitalistic society capitulates to the production upon a definite plan of the invading socialistic society. Certainly, this is so far still to the benefit and advantage of the capitalists. But, in this case, the exploitation is so palpable, that it must break down. No nation will put up with production conducted by trusts, with so barefaced an exploitation of the community by a small band of dividend-mongers.

In any case, with trusts or without, the official representative of capitalist society — the state — will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production. [4] This necessity for conversion into State property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication — the post office, the telegraphs, the railways.

If the crises demonstrate the incapacity of the bourgeoisie for managing any longer modern productive forces, the transformation of the great establishments for production and distribution into joint-stock companies, trusts, and State property, show how unnecessary the bourgeoisie are for that purpose. All the social functions of the capitalist has no further social function than that of pocketing dividends, tearing off coupons, and gambling on the Stock Exchange, where the different capitalists despoil one another of their capital. At first, the capitalistic mode of production forces out the workers. Now, it forces out the capitalists, and reduces them, just as it reduced the workers, to the ranks of the surplus-population, although not immediately into those of the industrial reserve army.

But, the transformation — either into joint-stock companies and trusts, or into State-ownership — does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies and trusts, this is obvious. And the modern State, again, is only the organization that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine — the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers — proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is, rather, brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State-ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution.

This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonizing with the socialized character of the means of production. And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control, except that of society as a whole. The social character of the means of production and of the products today reacts against the producers, periodically disrupts all production and exchange, acts only like a law of Nature working blindly, forcibly, destructively. But, with the taking over by society of the productive forces, the social character of the means of production and of the products will be utilized by the producers with a perfect understanding of its nature, and instead of being a source of disturbance and periodical collapse, will become the most powerful lever of production itself.

Active social forces work exactly like natural forces: blindly, forcibly, destructively, so long as we do not understand, and reckon with, them. But, when once we understand them, when once we grasp their action, their direction, their effects, it depends only upon ourselves to subject them more and more to our own will, and, by means of them, to reach our own ends. And this holds quite especially of the mighty productive forces of today. As long as we obstinately refuse to understand the nature and the character of these social means of action — and this understanding goes against the grain of the capitalist mode of production, and its defenders — so long these forces are at work in spite of us, in opposition to us, so long they master us, as we have shown above in detail.

But when once their nature is understood, they can, in the hand working together, be transformed from master demons into willing servants. The difference is as that between the destructive force of electricity in the lightning in the storm, and electricity under command in the telegraph and the voltaic arc; the difference between a conflagration, and fire working in the service of man. With this recognition, at last, of the real nature of the productive forces of today, the social anarchy of production gives place to a social regulation of production upon a definite plan, according to the needs of the community and of each individual. Then the capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the producer, and then the appropriator, is replaced by the mode of appropriation of the products that is based upon the nature of the modern means of production; upon the one hand, direct social appropriation, as means to the maintenance and extension of production — on the other, direct individual appropriation, as means of subsistence and of enjoyment.

Whilst the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution. Whilst it forces on more and more of the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialized, into State property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this

revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into State property.*

But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinction and class antagonisms, abolishes also the State as State. Society, thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the State. That is, of an organization of the particular class which was, pro tempore, the exploiting class, an organization for the purpose of preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production, and, therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labor). The State was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But, it was this only in so far as it was the State of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a whole: in ancient times, the State of slaveowning citizens; in the Middle Ages, the feudal lords; in our own times, the bourgeoisie.

When, at last, it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a State, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the State really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society — the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society — this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a State. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The State is not "abolished". *It dies out.* This gives the measure of the value of the phrase: "a free State", both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific inefficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the State out of hand.

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realization were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequences of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times. So long as the total social labor only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labor engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society —

so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by side with the great majority, exclusively bond slaves to labor, arises a class freed from directly productive labor, which looks after the general affairs of society: the direction of labor, State business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labor that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. it does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working-class, from turning its social leadership into an intensified exploitation of the masses.

But if, upon this showing, division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself, has become a obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually, a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is scarcely any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every 10 years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot use, and stands helpless, face-to-face with the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production burst the bonds that the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly-accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialized appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of today, and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialized production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day-by-day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties — this possibility is now, for the first time, here, but *it is here*. [5]



With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organization. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then, for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of nature, because he has now become master of his own social organization. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face-to-face with man as laws of Nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man's own social organization, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by Nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have, hitherto, governed history, pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history — only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom.

Let us briefly sum up our sketch of historical evolution.

**I. Mediaeval Society** — Individual production on a small scale. Means of production adapted for individual use; hence primitive, ungainly, petty, dwarfed in action. Production for immediate consumption, either of the producer himself or his feudal lord. Only where an excess of production over this consumption occurs is such excess offered for sale, enters into exchange. Production of commodities, therefore, only in its infancy. But already it contains within itself, in embryo, anarchy in the production of society at large.

**II. Capitalist Revolution** — transformation of industry, at first by means of simple cooperation and manufacture. Concentration of the means of production, hitherto scattered, into great workshops. As a consequence, their transformation from individual to social means of production — a transformation which does not, on the whole, affect the form of exchange. The old forms of appropriation remain in force. The capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a *social* act. Exchange and appropriation continue to be *individual* acts, the acts of individuals. The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light.

A. Severance of the producer from the means of production. Condemnation of the worker to wage-labor for life. Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

- B. Growing predominance and increasing effectiveness of the laws governing the production of commodities. Unbridled competition. Contradiction between socialized organization in the individual factory and social anarchy in the production as a whole.
- C. On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing displacement of laborers. Industrial reserve-army. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard-of development of productive forces, excess of supply over demand, over-production and products — excess there, of laborers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital — which their very superabundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity. The mode of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange.
- D. Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later in by trusts, then by the State. The bourgeoisie demonstrated to be a superfluous class. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

**III. Proletarian Revolution** — Solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialized character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialized production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the State dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master — free.

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and this the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific Socialism.

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## Barbarism and Civilization

[redaction]

[Which] brings us to the examination of the economic basis of these conditions.

The population is extremely sparse; it is dense only at the tribe's place of settlement, around which lie in a wide circle first the hunting grounds and then the protective belt of neutral forest, which separates the tribe from others. The division of labor is purely primitive, between the sexes only. The man fights in the wars, goes hunting and fishing, procures the raw materials of food and the tools necessary for doing so. The woman looks after the house and the preparation of food and clothing, cooks, weaves, sews. They are each master in their own sphere: the man in the forest, the woman in the house. Each is owner of the instruments which he or she makes and uses: the man of the weapons, the hunting and fishing implements, the woman of the household gear. The housekeeping is communal among several and often many families. [1] What is made and used in common is common property - the house, the garden, the long-boat. Here therefore, and here alone, there still exists in actual fact that "property created by the owner's labor" which in civilized society is an ideal fiction of the jurists and economists, the last lying legal pretense by which modern capitalist property still bolsters itself up.

But humanity did not everywhere remain at this stage. In Asia they found animals which could be tamed and, when once tamed, bred. The wild buffalo-cow had to be hunted; the tame buffalo-cow gave a calf yearly and milk as well. A number of the most advanced tribes - the Aryans, Semites, perhaps already also the Turanians - now made their chief work first the taming of cattle, later their breeding and tending only. Pastoral tribes separated themselves from the mass of the rest of the barbarians: the first great social division of labor. The pastoral tribes produced not only more necessities of life than the other barbarians, but different ones. They possessed the advantage over them of having not only milk, milk products and greater supplies of meat, but also skins, wool, goat-hair, and spun and woven fabrics, which became more common as the amount of raw material increased. Thus for the first time regular exchange became possible. At the earlier stages only occasional exchanges can take place; particular skill in the making of weapons and tools may lead to a temporary division of labor. Thus in many places undoubted remains of workshops for the making of stone tools have been found, dating from the later Stone Age. The artists who here perfected their skill probably worked for the whole community, as each special handicraftsman still does in the gentile communities in India. In no case could exchange arise at this stage except within the tribe itself, and then only as an exceptional event. But now, with the differentiation of pastoral tribes, we find all the

conditions ripe for exchange between branches of different tribes and its development into a regular established institution. Originally tribes exchanged with tribe through the respective chiefs of the gentes; but as the herds began to pass into private ownership, exchange between individuals became more common, and, finally, the only form. Now the chief article which the pastoral tribes exchanged with their neighbors was cattle; cattle became the commodity by which all other commodities were valued and which was everywhere willingly taken in exchange for them - in short, cattle acquired a money function and already at this stage did the work of money. With such necessity and speed, even at the very beginning of commodity exchange, did the need for a money commodity develop.

Horticulture, probably unknown to Asiatic barbarians of the lower stage, was being practiced by them in the middle stage at the latest, as the forerunner of agriculture. In the climate of the Turanian plateau, pastoral life is impossible without supplies of fodder for the long and severe winter. Here, therefore, it was essential that land should be put under grass and corn cultivated. The same is true of the steppes north of the Black Sea. But when once corn had been grown for the cattle, it also soon became food for men. The cultivated land still remained tribal property; at first it was allotted to the gens, later by the gens to the household communities and finally to individuals for use. The users may have had certain rights of possession, but nothing more.

Of the industrial achievements of this stage, two are particularly important. The first is the loom, the second the smelting of metal ores and the working of metals. Copper and tin and their alloy, bronze, were by far the most important. Bronze provided serviceable tools and weapons, though it could not displace stone tools; only iron could do that, and the method of obtaining iron was not yet understood. Gold and silver were beginning to be used for ornament and decoration, and must already have acquired a high value as compared with copper and bronze.

The increase of production in all branches - cattle-raising, agriculture, domestic handicrafts - gave human labor-power the capacity to produce a larger product than was necessary for its maintenance. At the same time it increased the daily amount of work to be done by each member of the gens, household community or single family. It was now desirable to bring in new labor forces. War provided them; prisoners of war were turned into slaves. With its increase of the productivity of labor, and therefore of wealth, and its extension of the field of production, the first great social division of labor was bound, in the general historical conditions prevailing, to bring slavery in its train. From the first great social division of labor arose the first great cleavage of society into two classes: masters and slaves, exploiters and exploited.

As to how and when the herds passed out of the common possession of the tribe or the gens into the ownership of individual heads of families, we know nothing at present. But in the main it must have occurred during this stage. With the herds and the other new riches, a revolution came over the family. To procure the necessities of

life had always been the business of the man; he produced and owned the means of doing so. The herds were the new means of producing these necessities; the taming of the animals in the first instance and their later tending were the man's work. To him, therefore, belonged the cattle, and to him the commodities and the slaves received in exchange for cattle. All the surplus which the acquisition of the necessities of life now yielded fell to the man; the woman shared in its enjoyment, but had no part in its ownership. The "savage" warrior and hunter had been content to take second place in the house, after the woman; the "gentler" shepherd, in the arrogance of his wealth, pushed himself forward into the first place and the woman down into the second. And she could not complain. The division of labor within the family had regulated the division of property between the man and the woman. That division of labor had remained the same; and yet it now turned the previous domestic relation upside down, simply because the division of labor outside the family had changed. The same cause which had ensured to the woman her previous supremacy in the house - that her activity was confined to domestic labor - this same cause now ensured the man's supremacy in the house: the domestic labor of the woman no longer counted beside the acquisition of the necessities of life by the man; the latter was everything, the former an unimportant extra. We can already see from this that to emancipate woman and make her the equal of the man is and remains an impossibility so long as the woman is shut out from social productive labor and restricted to private domestic labor. The emancipation of woman will only be possible when woman can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time. And only now has that become possible through modern large-scale industry, which does not merely permit of the employment of female labor over a wide range, but positively demands it, while it also tends towards ending private domestic labor by changing it more and more into a public industry.

The man now being actually supreme in the house, the last barrier to his absolute supremacy had fallen. This autocracy was confirmed and perpetuated by the overthrow of mother-right, the introduction of father-right, and the gradual transition of the pairing marriage into monogamy. But this tore a breach in the old gentile order; the single family became a power, and its rise was a menace to the gens.

The next step leads us to the upper stage of barbarism, the period when all civilized peoples have their Heroic Age: the age of the iron sword, but also of the iron plowshare and ax. Iron was now at the service of man, the last and most important of all the raw materials which played a historically revolutionary role - until the potato. Iron brought the tillage of large areas, the clearing of wide tracts of virgin forest; iron gave to the handicraftsman tools so hard and sharp that no stone, no other known metal could resist them. All this came gradually; the first iron was often even softer than bronze. Hence stone weapons only disappeared slowly; not merely in the Hildebrandslied, but even as late as Hastings in 1066, stone axes were still used for fighting. But progress could not now be stopped; it went forward with fewer checks

and greater speed. The town, with its houses of stone or brick, encircled by stone walls, towers and ramparts, became the central seat of the tribe or the confederacy of tribes - an enormous architectural advance, but also a sign of growing danger and need for protection. Wealth increased rapidly, but as the wealth of individuals. The products of weaving, metal-work and the other handicrafts, which were becoming more and more differentiated, displayed growing variety and skill. In addition to corn, leguminous plants and fruit, agriculture now provided wine and oil, the preparation of which had been learned. Such manifold activities were no longer within the scope of one and the same individual; the second great division of labor took place: handicraft separated from agriculture. The continuous increase of production and simultaneously of the productivity of labor heightened the value of human labor-power. Slavery, which during the preceding period was still in its beginnings and sporadic, now becomes an essential constituent part of the social system; slaves no longer merely help with production - they are driven by dozens to work in the fields and the workshops. With the splitting up of production into the two great main branches, agriculture and handicrafts, arises production directly for exchange, commodity production; with it came commerce, not only in the interior and on the tribal boundaries, but also already overseas. All this, however, was still very undeveloped; the precious metals were beginning to be the predominant and general money commodity, but still uncoined, exchanging simply by their naked weight.

The distinction of rich and poor appears beside that of freemen and slaves - with the new division of labor, a new cleavage of society into classes. The inequalities of property among the individual heads of families break up the old communal household communities wherever they had still managed to survive, and with them the common cultivation of the soil by and for these communities. The cultivated land is allotted for use to single families, at first temporarily, later permanently. The transition to full private property is gradually accomplished, parallel with the transition of the pairing marriage into monogamy. The single family is becoming the economic unit of society.

The denser population necessitates closer consolidation both for internal and external action. The confederacy of related tribes becomes everywhere a necessity, and soon also their fusion, involving the fusion of the separate tribal territories into one territory of the nation. The military leader of the people, *res*, *basileus*, *thiudans* - becomes an indispensable, permanent official. The assembly of the people takes form, wherever it did not already exist. Military leader, council, assembly of the people are the organs of gentile society developed into military democracy - military, since war and organization for war have now become regular functions of national life. Their neighbors' wealth excites the greed of peoples who already see in the acquisition of wealth one of the main aims of life. They are barbarians: they think it more easy and in fact more honorable to get riches by pillage than by work. War, formerly waged only in revenge for injuries or to extend territory that had grown too small, is now waged simply for plunder and becomes a regular industry. Not without

reason the bristling battlements stand menacingly about the new fortified towns; in the moat at their foot yawns the grave of the gentile constitution, and already they rear their towers into civilization. Similarly in the interior. The wars of plunder increase the power of the supreme military leader and the subordinate commanders; the customary election of their successors from the same families is gradually transformed, especially after the introduction of father-right, into a right of hereditary succession, first tolerated, then claimed, finally usurped; the foundation of the hereditary monarchy and the hereditary nobility is laid. Thus the organs of the gentile constitution gradually tear themselves loose from their roots in the people, in gens, phratry, tribe, and the whole gentile constitution changes into its opposite: from an organization of tribes for the free ordering of their own affairs it becomes an organization for the plundering and oppression of their neighbors; and correspondingly its organs change from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for the domination and oppression of the people. That, however, would never have been possible if the greed for riches had not split the members of the gens into rich and poor, if "the property differences within one and the same gens had not transformed its unity of interest into antagonism between its members" (Marx), if the extension of slavery had not already begun to make working for a living seem fit only for slaves and more dishonorable than pillage.

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We have now reached the threshold of civilization. Civilization opens with a new advance in the division of labor. At the lowest stage of barbarism men produced only directly for their own needs; any acts of exchange were isolated occurrences, the object of exchange merely some fortuitous surplus. In the middle stage of barbarism we already find among the pastoral peoples a possession in the form of cattle which, once the herd has attained a certain size, regularly produces a surplus over and above the tribe's own requirements, leading to a division of labor between pastoral peoples and backward tribes without herds, and hence to the existence of two different levels of production side by side with one another and the conditions necessary for regular exchange. The upper stage of barbarism brings us the further division of labor between agriculture and handicrafts, hence the production of a continually increasing portion of the products of labor directly for exchange, so that exchange between individual producers assumes the importance of a vital social function.

Civilization consolidates and intensifies all these existing divisions of labor, particularly by sharpening the opposition between town and country (the town may economically dominate the country, as in antiquity, or the country the town, as in the middle ages), and it adds a third division of labor, peculiar to itself and of decisive importance: it creates a class which no longer concerns itself with production, but only with the exchange of the products - the merchants. Hitherto whenever classes had begun to form, it had always been exclusively in the field of production; the persons engaged in production were separated into those who directed and those

who executed, or else into large-scale and small-scale producers. Now for the first time a class appears which, without in any way participating in production, captures the direction of production as a whole and economically subjugates the producers; which makes itself into an indispensable middleman between any two producers and exploits them both. Under the pretext that they save the producers the trouble and risk of exchange, extend the sale of their products to distant markets and are therefore the most useful class of the population, a class of parasites comes into being, "genuine social ichneumons," who, as a reward for their actually very insignificant services, skim all the cream off production at home and abroad, rapidly amass enormous wealth and correspondingly social influence, and for that reason receive under civilization ever higher honors and ever greater control of production, until at last they also bring forth a product of their own - the periodical trade crises.

At our stage of development, however, the young merchants had not even begun to dream of the great destiny awaiting them. But they were growing and making themselves indispensable, which was quite sufficient. And with the formation of the merchant class came also the development of metallic money, the minted coin, a new instrument for the domination of the non-producer over the producer and his production. The commodity of commodities had been discovered, that which holds all other commodities hidden in itself, the magic power which can change at will into everything desirable and desired. The man who had it ruled the world of production - and who had more of it than anybody else? The merchant. The worship of money was safe in his hands. He took good care to make it clear that, in face of money, all commodities, and hence all producers of commodities, must prostrate themselves in adoration in the dust. He proved practically that all other forms of wealth fade into mere semblance beside this incarnation of wealth as such. Never again has the power of money shown itself in such primitive brutality and violence as during these days of its youth. After commodities had begun to sell for money, loans and advances in money came also, and with them interest and usury. No legislation of later times so utterly and ruthlessly delivers over the debtor to the usurious creditor as the legislation of ancient Athens and ancient Rome - and in both cities it arose spontaneously, as customary law, without any compulsion other than the economic.

Alongside wealth in commodities and slaves, alongside wealth in money, there now appeared wealth in land also. The individuals' rights of possession in the pieces of land originally allotted to them by gens or tribe had now become so established that the land was their hereditary property. Recently they had striven above all to secure their freedom against the rights of the gentile community over these lands, since these rights had become for them a fetter. They got rid of the fetter - but soon afterwards of their new landed property also. Full, free ownership of the land meant not only power, uncurtailed and unlimited, to possess the land; it meant also the power to alienate it. As long as the land belonged to the gens, no such power could exist. But when the new landed proprietor shook off once and for all the fetters laid upon him by the prior right of gens and tribe, he also cut the ties which had hitherto inseparably attached him to the land. Money, invented at the same time as private



property in land, showed him what that meant. Land could now become a commodity; it could be sold and pledged. Scarcely had private property in land been introduced than the mortgage was already invented (see Athens). As hetaerism and prostitution dog the heels of monogamy, so from now onwards mortgage dogs the heels of private land ownership. You asked for full, free alienable ownership of the land and now you have got it - "tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin."

With trade expansion, money and usury, private property in land and mortgages, the concentration and centralization of wealth in the hands of a small class rapidly advanced, accompanied by an increasing impoverishment of the masses and an increasing mass of impoverishment. The new aristocracy of wealth, in so far as it had not been identical from the outset with the old hereditary aristocracy, pushed it permanently into the background (in Athens, in Rome, among the Germans). And simultaneous with this division of the citizens into classes according to wealth there was an enormous increase, particularly in Greece, in the number of slaves, [2] whose forced labor was the foundation on which the superstructure of the entire society was reared.

Let us now see what had become of the gentile constitution in this social upheaval. Confronted by the new forces in whose growth it had had no share, the gentile constitution was helpless. The necessary condition for its existence was that the members of a gens or at least of a tribe were settled together in the same territory and were its sole inhabitants. That had long ceased to be the case. Every territory now had a heterogeneous population belonging to the most varied gentes and tribes; everywhere slaves, protected persons and aliens lived side by side with citizens. The settled conditions of life which had only been achieved towards the end of the middle stage of barbarism were broken up by the repeated shifting and changing of residence under the pressure of trade, alteration of occupation and changes in the ownership of the land. The members of the gentile bodies could no longer meet to look after their common concerns; only unimportant matters, like the religious festivals, were still perfunctorily attended to. In addition to the needs and interests with which the gentile bodies were intended and fitted to deal, the upheaval in productive relations and the resulting change in the social structure had given rise to new needs and interests, which were not only alien to the old gentile order, but ran directly counter to it at every point. The interests of the groups of handicraftsmen which had arisen with the division of labor, the special needs of the town as opposed to the country, called for new organs.

But each of these groups was composed of people of the most diverse gentes, phratries, and tribes, and even included aliens. Such organs had therefore to be formed outside the gentile constitution, alongside of it, and hence in opposition to it. And this conflict of interests was at work within every gentile body, appearing in its most extreme form in the association of rich and poor, usurers and debtors, in the same gens and the same tribe. Further, there was the new mass of population outside the gentile bodies, which, as in Rome, was able to become a power in the

land and at the same time was too numerous to be gradually absorbed into the kinship groups and tribes. In relation to this mass, the gentile bodies stood opposed as closed, privileged corporations; the primitive natural democracy had changed into a malign aristocracy. Lastly, the gentile constitution had grown out of a society which knew no internal contradictions, and it was only adapted to such a society. It possessed no means of coercion except public opinion. But here was a society which by all its economic conditions of life had been forced to split itself into freemen and slaves, into the exploiting rich and the exploited poor; a society which not only could never again reconcile these contradictions, but was compelled always to intensify them. Such a society could only exist either in the continuous open fight of these classes against one another, or else under the rule of a third power, which, apparently standing above the warring classes, suppressed their open conflict and allowed the class struggle to be fought out at most in the economic field, in so-called legal form. The gentile constitution was finished. It had been shattered by the division of labor and its result, the cleavage of society into classes. It was replaced by the state.

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The three main forms in which the state arises on the ruins of the gentile constitution have been examined in detail above. Athens provides the purest, classic form; here the state springs directly and mainly out of the class oppositions which develop within gentile society itself. In Rome, gentile society becomes a closed aristocracy in the midst of the numerous plebs who stand outside it, and have duties but no rights; the victory of plebs breaks up the old constitution based on kinship, and erects on its ruins the state, into which both the gentile aristocracy and the plebs are soon completely absorbed. Lastly, in the case of the German conquerors of the Roman Empire, the state springs directly out of the conquest of large foreign territories, which the gentile constitution provides no means of governing. But because this conquest involves neither a serious struggle with the original population nor a more advanced division of labor; because conquerors and conquered are almost on the same level of economic development, and the economic basis of society remains therefore as before - for these reasons the gentile constitution is able to survive for many centuries in the altered, territorial form of the mark constitution and even for a time to rejuvenate itself in a feebler shape in the later noble and patrician families, and indeed in peasant families, as in Ditmarschen. [3]

The state is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from without; just as little is it "the reality of the moral idea," "the image and the reality of reason," as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is a product of society at a particular stage of development; it is the admission that this society has involved itself in insoluble self-contradiction and is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to exorcise. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, shall not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, a power, apparently standing above society, has become necessary to moderate the conflict

and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it and increasingly alienating itself from it, is the state.

In contrast to the old gentile organization, the state is distinguished firstly by the grouping of its members on a territorial basis. The old gentile bodies, formed and held together by ties of blood, had, as we have seen, become inadequate largely because they presupposed that the gentile members were bound to one particular locality, whereas this had long ago ceased to be the case. The territory was still there, but the people had become mobile. The territorial division was therefore taken as the starting point and the system introduced by which citizens exercised their public rights and duties where they took up residence, without regard to gens or tribe. This organization of the citizens of the state according to domicile is common to all states. To us, therefore, this organization seems natural; but, as we have seen, hard and protracted struggles were necessary before it was able in Athens and Rome to displace the old organization founded on kinship.

The second distinguishing characteristic is the institution of a public force which is no longer immediately identical with the people's own organization of themselves as an armed power. This special public force is needed because a self-acting armed organization of the people has become impossible since their cleavage into classes. The slaves also belong to the population: as against the 365,000 slaves, the 90,000 Athenian citizens constitute only a privileged class. The people's army of the Athenian democracy confronted the slaves as an aristocratic public force, and kept them in check; but to keep the citizens in check as well, a police-force was needed, as described above. This public force exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men, but also of material appendages, prisons and coercive institutions of all kinds, of which gentile society knew nothing. It may be very insignificant, practically negligible, in societies with still undeveloped class antagonisms and living in remote areas, as at times and in places in the United States of America. But it becomes stronger in proportion as the class antagonisms within the state become sharper and as adjoining states grow larger and more populous. It is enough to look at Europe today, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have brought the public power to a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the state itself.

In order to maintain this public power, contributions from the state citizens are necessary - taxes. These were completely unknown to gentile society. We know more than enough about them today. With advancing civilization, even taxes are not sufficient; the state draws drafts on the future, contracts loans, state debts. Our old Europe can tell a tale about these, too.

In possession of the public power and the right of taxation, the officials now present themselves as organs of society standing above society. The free, willing respect accorded to the organs of the gentile constitution is not enough for them, even if they could have it. Representatives of a power which estranges them from society, they have to be given prestige by means of special decrees, which invest them with a

peculiar sanctity and inviolability. The lowest police officer of the civilized state has more "authority" than all the organs of gentile society put together; but the mightiest prince and the greatest statesman or general of civilization might envy the humblest of the gentile chiefs the unforced and unquestioned respect accorded to him. For the one stands in the midst of society; the other is forced to pose as something outside and above it.

As the state arose from the need to keep class antagonisms in check, but also arose in the thick of the fight between the classes, it is normally the state of the most powerful, economically ruling class, which by its means becomes also the politically ruling class, and so acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. The ancient state was, above all, the state of the slave-owners for holding down the slaves, just as the feudal state was the organ of the nobility for holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen, and the modern representative state is the instrument for exploiting wage-labor by capital. Exceptional periods, however, occur when the warring classes are so nearly equal in forces that the state power, as apparent mediator, acquires for the moment a certain independence in relation to both. This applies to the absolute monarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which balances the nobility and the bourgeoisie against one another; and to the Bonapartism of the First and particularly of the Second French Empire, which played off the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The latest achievement in this line, in which ruler and ruled look equally comic, is the new German Empire of the Bismarckian nation; here the capitalists and the workers are balanced against one another and both of them fleeced for the benefit of the decayed Prussian cabbage Junkers.

Further, in most historical states the rights conceded to citizens are graded on a property basis, whereby it is directly admitted that the state is an organization for the protection of the possessing class against the non-possessing class. This is already the case in the Athenian and Roman property classes. Similarly in the medieval feudal state, in which the extent of political power was determined by the extent of landownership. Similarly, also, in the electoral qualifications in modern parliamentary states. This political recognition of property differences is, however, by no means essential. On the contrary, it marks a low stage in the development of the state. The highest form of the state, the democratic republic, which in our modern social conditions becomes more and more an unavoidable necessity and is the form of state in which alone the last decisive battle between proletariat and bourgeoisie can be fought out - the democratic republic no longer officially recognizes differences of property. Wealth here employs its power indirectly, but all the more surely.

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